

REMARKS

In the Drawings:

The Examiner objected to the drawings pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.84 as being informal. Applicants have attached drawings which they assert are in compliance with section 1.84. Applicants therefore request that this objection be withdrawn.

In the Claims:

A. Rejection of Claims 14-17 Under Section 112

The Examiner rejected claims 14-17 as failing to comply with the written description. Applicant inadvertently omitted the word “rim” from the phrase “outer wall of the tire.” Applicant has amended the claims so that the referenced limitation recites “outer wall of the tire rim.” Thus, Applicant asserts that this rejection has been overcome and requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

B. Rejection of Claims 16-17 For Failure To Comply With The Specification

The Examiner has rejected these claims for failure to comply with the specification. Applicant respectfully traverses. In claiming that the valve cannot be reversed, it appears that the Examiner has mistakenly assumed that the claimed valve must be a valve for inflating tires. This is incorrect. Rather, as the Applicant discloses in paragraph [0033], in some embodiments the valve may be reversed so that the adjustment member is exposed to the atmosphere. In such as case, pressure from the tire enters through the opening in the cushioning member and pathway. When the valve is actuated, excess pressure would indeed escape through the throughway of the adjustment member, as disclosed in paragraph [0033]. Thus, claims 16-17 are fully supported by the specification, and Applicant requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

C. Rejection of Claims 1-5, 7, 9-18 and 22 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-5, 7, 9-18 and 22 as anticipated in view of Fuller (U.S. Patent No. 3,426,787). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Fuller discloses a tire valve assembly. The tire valve assembly includes a washer 34 and disc 30 that include an aperture 36 to facilitate the inflation of a tire (Fuller, col. 3, lines 26-27; col. 4, lines 7-9).

Applicant has amended claims 1 and 13 so that the bearing element is continuous such that there is no fluid communication between the bearing element and the pathway. While, as disclosed, the bearing element may facilitate fluid communication once the valve is actuated, it does not itself engage in fluid communication since it is continuous and lacks a passage. Fuller clearly does not disclose such features, as the washer 34 and disc 30 of Fuller include an aperture 36. Moreover, there is no suggestion in Fuller to eliminate the aperture so that the washer 34 and disc 30 are continuous. In fact, were Fuller so modified, the invention of Fuller would not work as a tire could not be inflated. (*See e.g.*, Fuller, col. 3, lines 26-27; col. 4, lines 7-9). Therefore, Applicant asserts that claim 22 is allowable.

Applicant has amended claim 22 so that the detent of the cushioning member is inserted past one of the inner or outer wall of the tire rim while the flange of the cushioning member contacts the other of the inner or outer wall of the tire rim, i.e., so that the pressure relief valve is reversible. As Applicant has explained above, this is fully supported by paragraph [0033] of the specification. Fuller clearly does not disclose that the valve assembly may be reversibly inserted through a tire rim. Therefore, Applicant asserts that claim 22 is allowable.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that the rejections have been overcome and that claims 1, 13 and 23 are allowable and requests that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn. Claims 2-12 and 14-22 depend from claims 1 and 13, respectively, and therefore are allowable for at least the same reasons as claims 1 and 13.


In the Specification:

The Examiner objected to paragraph [0030] of the disclosure. Applicant respectfully asserts that the Examiner has misunderstood the invention. Referring to Figure 3, in one embodiment the valve will be inserted so that the cap 130 and corresponding pathway, is exposed to the atmosphere. In contrast, holes 105 will not be exposed to the atmosphere. If they were exposed, pressurized air would not enter the chamber 120. Thus, when the pressure relief valve is “actuated,” excess pressure will in fact exit out the pathway 112. Applicant requests that this objection be withdrawn.

SUMMARY

Pending Claims 1-22 as amended are patentable. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner grant early allowance of this application. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorneys for the Applicant via telephone if such communication would expedite this application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Anastasia Heffner", written over a horizontal line.

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